

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. A method of extracting related information from electronic files, each
2 file containing a plurality of records for containing data, the method comprising:
3 a) comparing data contained in a key segment of each record of a first file
4 to data in a related key segment of each record of a second file;
5 b) upon each occurrence of a match of data in the key segment of a record
6 in the first file to data in the related key segment of a record in the second file, creating a
7 record in a temporary electronic file, wherein the record in the temporary file includes data
8 from the records of both the first and second files having matching key segment data;
9 c) selecting data from records of the temporary file; and
10 d) outputting the selected data.
- 1 2. The method recited in claim 1, further comprising thereafter deleting
2 the temporary file.
- 1 3. The method recited in claim 1, further comprising:
2 for additional files, repeating steps a), b) and c) using an additional file as the
3 first file and the temporary file as the second file.
- 1 4. The method recited in claim 1, wherein the first file is stored in
2 electronic form on magnetic tape.
- 1 5. The method recited in claim 1, wherein the first file is stored in
2 electronic form on media selected from a group consisting of solid state memory, magnetic
3 disk memory, and optical memory.
- 1 6. The method recited in claim 1, further comprising sorting the records
2 of the first file based on data contained in the key segment.
- 1 7. The method of claim 1, wherein a record of the temporary file created
2 upon a match of data between records in the first and second files contains less than all of the
3 data from the matching records of the first and second files.
- 1 8. The method of claim 1, further comprising selecting data from the
2 records of the temporary file based in part on logic operators.

1 9. The method of claim 8, wherein the logic operators are selected from a
2 group consisting of less than, greater than, equal to, not-equal-to, less-than-or-equal-to,
3 greater-than-or-equal-to, in and not in.

1 10. A system for extracting related information from electronic files,
2 comprising:

3 a processor;
4 a storage device;
5 an output device;
6 a first electronic file stored on the storage device, the first electronic file
7 containing a plurality of records for containing data; and
8 a second electronic file stored on the storage device, the second electronic file
9 containing a plurality of records for containing data;

10 wherein the processor is configured to compare data contained in a key
11 segment of each record of the first file to data in a related key segment of each record of the
12 second file;

13 wherein the processor is further configured such that upon each occurrence of
14 a match of data in the key segment of a record in the first file to data in the related key
15 segment of a record in the second file, the processor causes a record in a temporary electronic
16 file to be created, wherein the record in the temporary file includes data from the records of
17 both the first and second file having matching a key segment data; and

18 wherein the processor is further configured to select data from records of the
19 temporary file and output the data to the output device.

1 11. The system of claim 10 wherein the processor is further configured to
2 thereafter delete the temporary file.

1 12. The system of claim 10, wherein the first file is stored on the storage
2 device on magnetic tape.

1 13. The system of claim 10, wherein the first file is stored on the storage
2 device on media selected from a group consisting of solid state memory, magnetic disk
3 memory, and optical memory.

1 14. The system of claim 10, wherein the processor is further configured to
2 sort the records of the first file based on data contained in the key segment.

1 15. The system of claim 10, wherein a record of the temporary file created
2 upon a match of data between records in the first and second files contains less than all of the
3 data from the records of the first and second files.

1 16. The system of claim 10, wherein the processor is further configured to
2 select data from records of the temporary file based in part on logic operators.

1 17. The system of claim 16, wherein the logic operators are selected from
2 a group consisting of less than, greater than, equal to, not-equal-to, less-than-or-equal-to,
3 greater-than-or-equal-to, in and not in.

1 18. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions
2 for performing a method comprising:

3 a) receiving instructions identifying two or more electronic files from
4 which to extract related information, each file containing a plurality of records for containing
5 data;

6 b) receiving instructions identifying a key segment of each record of a
7 first file and a related key segment of each record of a second file;

8 c) comparing data contained in the key segment of each record of the first
9 file to data contained in the related key segment of each record of the second file;

10 d) upon each occurrence of a match of data in the key segment of a record
11 in the first file to data in the related key segment of a record in the second file, creating a
12 record in a temporary electronic file, wherein the record in the temporary file includes data
13 from the records of both the first and second file having matching key segment data;

14 e) receiving instructions identifying data to be selected from the
15 temporary file;

16 f) selecting the data from records of the temporary file; and
17 g) outputting the data.

1 19. The medium of claim 18, wherein the method further includes
2 thereafter deleting the temporary file.

1 20. The medium of claim 18, wherein the method further includes:
2 for additional files, repeating steps a), b), c) and d) using an additional file as
3 the first file and the temporary file as the second file.

1 21. The medium of claim 18, wherein the method further includes sorting
2 the records of the first file based on data contained in the key segment.

1 22. The medium of claim 18, wherein the method further includes
2 selecting data from records of the temporary file based in part on logic operators.

1 23. The medium of claim 22, wherein the logic operators are selected from
2 a group consisting of less than, greater than, equal to, not-equal-to, less-than-or-equal-to,
3 greater-than-or-equal-to, in and not in.

1 24. A temporary electronic file, comprising:
2 at least one record having a plurality of data fields, wherein the data fields are
3 related to data fields of records in a first and a second electronic file, and wherein the data in
4 each record of the temporary file are identical to data in the related data fields of either the
5 first or the second file.